

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 AEC-11 AID-20

CEA-02 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 FEA-02 FPC-01

H-03 INR-10 INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07

RSC-01 SCI-06 SPC-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00 PA-04

USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01 /170 W
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P R 081035Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 491

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 3150

BEIRIT PASS USINT BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, JA, IR, IZ

SUBJ: IRANIAN EXPORT REFINERY

REF: A. TEHRAN 1775 B. TOKYO 2149

SUMMARY: PRESS REPORT THAT IRAN HAS REJECTED PROPOSED COOPERATION BY JAPAN IN EXPORT REFINERY PROJECT, PARTLY DUE TO UNHAPPINESS OVER JAPAN-IRAQ COOPERATION. MITI SOURCES, HOWEVER, SAY TALKS WITH NIOC WILL CONTINUE.

1. LEADING JAPANESE ECONOMIC DAILY, NIHON KEIZAI, CARRIED FRONT PAGE REPORT MAR 8 THAT IRANIAN GOVT HAS TURNED DOWN JAPANESE PROPOSAL TO BUILD LARGE SCALE REFINERY IN THAT COUNTRY. ARTICLE SAYS THAT IRANIAN GOVT GAVE AS FORMAL REASON FOR THE REJECTION VAGUE JAPANESE STATEMENTS ON SIMULTANEOUS CONSTRUCTION OF
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REFINERY AND PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRY COMPLEXES.

HOWEVER, ARTICLE SPECULATES THAT REAL REASON BEHIND
IRANIAN ACTION IS UNHAPPINESS WITH JAPANESE CONSIDERATION
OF LONG TERM AID-FOR-OIL AGREEMENT WITH IRAQ. (SEE
TOKYO 2473)

2. GOJ SOURCES IN BOTH MITI AND FONOFF MAINTAIN THAT
REPORT IS NOT ENTIRELY ACCURATE. THEY SAY PRESS STORY
PROBABLY BASED ON CONVERSATION THAT JAPANESE AMBASSADOR
TO TEHRAN, ARITA, HAD WITH TRADE MINISTER ANSARI "ABOUT
ONE WEEK AGO". ARITA, ACCORDING TO MITI SOURCE, ASKED
ANSARI WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR JAPANESE TO
CONSIDER THE REFINERY PROJECT SEPARATELY FROM PETRO-

CHEMICAL PROJECT. ANSARI REPLIED THAT IRANIAN GOVT
DID NOT WANT TO CONTINUE TALKS WITH JAPAN UNLESS JAPAN
WERE WILLING TO MAKE SIMULTANEOUS COMMITMENT TO BOTH
PROJECTS.

3. DURING COURSE OF CONVERSATION WITH ARITA, ANSARI
MADE SEVERAL SNIDE REMARKS ABOUT JAPAN-IRAQ DISCUSSIONS.
ANSARI, ACCORDING MITI SOURCE, SARCASTICALLY CONGRATULATED
AMBASSADOR ARITA ON MORE SUCCESSFUL TALKS JAPANESE HAVING
ON A SIMILAR REFINERY PROJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION WITH
IRAQ. ANSARI ALSO SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD JAPAN WAS OFFER-
ING BAGHDAD ONE BILLION DOLLARS IN CREDITS AND WAS NOT
WILLING TO OFFER IRAN MORE THAN THIS FIGURE. IRANIAN ,
ANSARI SAID, WERE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED WITH THIS EQUALITY
OF TREATMENT ACCORDED BY JAPAN TO IRAQ AND IRAN.

4. MITI DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT ANSARI'S REMARKS REPRESENT TERMINATION
OF DISCUSSIONS ON REFINERY PROJECTS AND NOTES
THAT NIOC DESIRES TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS
WITH JAPAN. SHOESMITH

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